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This section details the 31 standards that the ACA's National Standards Commission has identified as being MANDATORY. Compliance with mandatory standards is required for accreditation to be granted, regardless of scores achieved in other areas of the standards.



# Mandatory Standards

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**Site and Food Service  
Standards**

**SF-1 EMERGENCY EXITS**

All buildings in a camp that are used for sleeping must be constructed or equipped with the following safety features:

- SF-1A: At least one emergency exit in addition to the main door or entrance.
- SF-1B: A direct means of emergency exit to the outside from each sleeping floor not at ground level.

**SF-2 CARE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

A camp must require that gas and liquid flammables, explosives, livestock medications, and other hazardous materials be:

- Handled only by persons trained or experienced in their safe use and disposal, and stored appropriately:
  - ✓ With access limited to trained persons,
  - ✓ In closed, safe containers that are plainly labeled as to contents, and
  - ✓ In locations separate from food.

**Transportation  
Standards**

**TR-1 MEDICAL EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION**

A camp must have a system in practice that assures emergency transportation is available at all times by the camp or user groups, or community emergency services with whom prior arrangements have been made in writing.

**Health and Wellness  
Standards**

**HW-1 FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY CARE  
PERSONNEL**

When campers are present in camp or on camp trips, a camp must require that trained adults with the following minimum qualifications be on duty at all times:

- HW-1A: When access to the emergency medical system (EMS) is 20 minutes or less, certification by a nationally recognized provider of training in first aid and CPR.
- HW-1B: When access to EMS is 20-60 minutes, certification by a nationally recognized provider of training in second-level first aid and CPR.
- HW-1C: When access to emergency rescue systems or EMS is more than one hour, certification from a nationally recognized provider of training in wilderness first aid and CPR.
- HW-1D: For nonmedical religious camps, an individual meeting qualifications specified in writing by the religious sponsor.

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## **HW-2 HEALTH HISTORY**

A camp must receive from each camper and seasonal staff person a current, signed health history, requesting all of the following information in relation to the activities in which the camper/staff may participate in camp:

- Description of any camp activities from which the camper/staff should be exempted for health reasons,
- Record of past medical treatment, if any,
- Record of allergies, dietary restrictions,
- Record of immunizations, including date of last tetanus shot,
- Record of current medications, prescribed and over-the-counter, and
- Description of any current physical, mental, or psychological conditions requiring medication, treatment, or special restrictions or considerations while at camp.

## **HW-23 EMERGENCY CARE PERSONNEL**

A camp must provide, or must advise user-group leaders, in writing, to provide, adults with the following qualifications to be on duty for emergency care:

- CPR certification from a nationally recognized provider, and
- For youth groups, first-aid certification from a nationally recognized provider.

## **OM-2 FIREARMS CONTROL**

A camp must require that all firearms and ammunition be stored under lock.

## **HR-4 STAFF SCREENING**

A camp must have written evidence of a policy in practice that requires screening for all camp staff with responsibility for or access to campers that includes:

HR-4A: Annually for all camp staff—paid, volunteer, and contracted:

- A voluntary disclosure statement, and
- A check of the National Sex Offender Public Registry, or for residents of states not participating in the National Sex Offender database, a check of the sexual offender registry of any state in which the applicant resided.

### **Health and Wellness Standards**

### **Operational Management Standards**

### **Human Resources Standards**

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**Program Design and  
Activities  
Standards**

**PD-1 OVERNIGHTS AND TRIPS**

A camp must require training for campers and staff, based on written procedures, for overnights, trips, and excursions, involving:


PD-1A: Persons using camp stoves or flammable liquids must be instructed in their proper use and care and supervised until competency is demonstrated.

**PD-23 ADDITIONAL FIREARM SAFETY**

A camp must require the following for all firearm activities:

PD-23A: When not in use, all firearms must be stored in a locked cabinet or closet, within a locked room or inaccessible area for redundant safety; and all ammunition is stored in either a third location or container, requiring a separate key or access system.

add PD - 24B  
Activities involving  
motorized vehicles



**PD-24 PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR**

A camp must require that helmets be worn by all participants (staff and campers) when engaged in:

PD-24A: Activities involving bicycling.

**PD-27 BOARDING AND SKATING SAFETY  
APPAREL**

A camp must require campers and staff in all boarding, in-line skating, and hockey activities to wear, at a minimum, the following safety gear:

PD-27A: Helmets.

**Program—Aquatics  
Standards**

**PA-14 SWIM LIFEGUARD CERTIFICATION**

To guard each swimming activity, a camp must provide, or must advise each user group in writing to provide, a person who has current certification as a lifeguard by a nationally recognized certifying body.

**PA-15 SWIM LIFEGUARD SKILLS**

A camp must have written documentation that every camp lifeguard has demonstrated skill in rescue and emergency procedures specific to the aquatic area and activities guarded.

**PA-16 STAFF SWIMMING**

For camp STAFF use of swimming facilities, a camp must implement a written policy that requires certified lifeguards be present at all times, and must have procedures that specify when guards or lookouts must be out of the water.

## **PA-17 FIRST AID/CPR**

A camp should require, or advise user groups in writing to provide, a staff member to be on duty and accessible at each separate swimming location (e.g., pool, lake, river) who has:

PA-17B: Certification from a nationally recognized provider in age-appropriate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that includes the use of breathing devices (e.g., pocket masks).

## **PA-18 SCUBA DIVING ACTIVITIES**

Whenever SCUBA diving occurs, a camp must provide, or must advise groups in writing to provide:

- For any SCUBA activities involving noncertified divers, an adult with a current SCUBA Instructor rating from a nationally recognized certifying body, and
- For SCUBA activities in which ALL participants are dive-certified, an adult with at least a current Divemaster certification from a nationally recognized certifying body.

## **PA-20 WATERCRAFT GUARD CERTIFICATION**

To guard each watercraft activity for day and resident camp programs and for youth groups, a camp must provide, or must advise the user group in writing to provide, a person who holds one of the following:

- Current instructor rating in the appropriate craft from a nationally recognized certifying body, or
- Current lifeguard training from a nationally recognized certifying body, or
- Other acceptable certification or license.

## **PA-21 WATERCRAFT RESCUE SKILLS**

A camp must have written documentation that every camp watercraft guard has demonstrated skill in water rescue and emergency procedures specific to the type of water and activities being conducted.

## **PA-22 WATERCRAFT SAFETY FOR STAFF, ALL-ADULT GROUPS, FAMILIES**

For staff, all-adult groups, and families with parent(s) present and supervising use of watercraft, a camp must have written evidence that participants are:

- Supervised by certified personnel (see Standard PA-20), or
- Instructed to implement written procedures that specify:
  - ✓ PFDs be worn by all persons at all times,
  - ✓ Safety regulations be followed, and
  - ✓ A designated checkout system is utilized

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**Program—Aquatics  
Standards**

**PA-23 FIRST AID/CPR**

A camp must provide, or advise user groups in writing to provide, a staff member to be on duty and accessible at each separate boating location (e.g., lake, river) who has:

PA-23B: Certification from a nationally recognized provider in age-appropriate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that includes the use of breathing devices (pocket masks).

**PA-24 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (PFDs)**

A camp must implement a policy requiring PFDs that are safe for use be worn by all persons involved in watercraft activities.

**PA-30 PUBLIC PROVIDERS OF SWIMMING**

A camp must implement a written policy to use only staffed public swimming facilities or providers who have persons on duty who have:

PA-30A: Lifeguarding certification (as in Standard PA-14).

PA-30B: Certification in first aid and CPR (as in Standard PA-17).

**PA-31 PUBLIC PROVIDERS OF BOATING**

A camp must implement a written policy to use only staffed public facilities for watercraft activities that have persons on duty who hold:

PA-31A: Appropriate watercraft certification (as in Standard PA-20).

PA-31B: Certification in first aid and CPR (as in Standard PA-23).

**PA-32 PFDs OFF-SITE OR AT PUBLIC AQUATIC FACILITIES**

A camp must implement a policy that PFDs that are safe for use are required to be worn by all persons in watercraft activities.

**Program—  
Adventure/Challenge  
Standards**

**PC-15 PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR**

A camp must implement a policy that requires the use of protective headgear by all participants when rock climbing, rappelling, spelunking, and when using high-ropes course elements or a vertical climbing wall/tower.

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## **PH-1 PONY RIDES**

A camp must have procedures in practice for the conduct of pony rides that:

PH-1A: Require the use of protective headgear specifically designed for horseback riding.

### **Program—Horseback Riding Standards**

## **PH-15 RIDER APPAREL**

A camp must have policies that require the following safety apparel be worn by campers and the camp staff:

PH-15A: Protective headgear specifically designed for horseback riding.

## **PT-1 TRIP ORIENTATION**

All campers and staff must be required to participate in a pre-trip orientation that includes at least:

PT-1B: Specific information and training on how and where to obtain medical and emergency assistance on the trip.

### **Program—Trip and Travel Standards**

## **PT-2 AQUATIC SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS**

A camp must have written evidence that all aquatic activities on trips are guarded and supervised by a staff member who has documented skills and training in water rescue and emergency procedures specific to the location and the activity, and

- For watercraft activities, has:
  - ✓ Instructor rating in the appropriate craft, or
  - ✓ Certification as a lifeguard from a nationally recognized certifying body, or
  - ✓ Other acceptable certification or license; and
- For swimming activities, has:
  - ✓ Certification as a lifeguard from a nationally recognized certifying body, or
  - ✓ Acceptable certification other than lifeguard, as in the section on watercraft activities, and the participants are wearing PFDs

## **PT-18 PFDs IN WATERCRAFT ACTIVITIES**

A camp must implement a policy requiring personal flotation devices (PFDs) that are safe for use be worn by all persons in watercraft activities.

